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A Proper War Requires a Map

I don't know how you feel about it, but I'm worried about the big change that is taking place in this country. We haven't gotten into either the war in Pakistan or the one in Ceylon. This is the first time in a generation or two that we haven't joined in other people's wars.

That's not the America I knew, man and boy. Makes a taxpayer want to hang his head in shame.

What have we got against the Pakistani people and the Ceylonese? Why should we let these people fight their wars without our going in there and helping them?

It's just not like us, and I plan to vote against this administration at the earliest opportunity for depriving us of our traditional duty to intervene.

Pretty soon we're going to have no use for all our troops and 7½ ton bombs, when Vietnam shuts down about the year 2000 A.D. We'll feel like fools if we don't have a war to join and people to protect from godless atheism and bring into the eternal sunshine of the Free World. Right?

We can't let opportunities like Pakistan and Ceylon slip out of our fingers, as if we were some kind of dolts like the Russians, Red Chinese, Japanese, West Germans, Italians, English, French, Scandinavians, Swiss, the Vaticanese and other thriving peoples who are too dumb to rush off to every war that pops its head.

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I CALLED the Pentagon today, trying to get a clue to our uncharacteristic conduct in the case of the snubbed wars in Pakistan and Ceylon and finally found a general who would talk. I asked him point blank, "General, how come we don't send troops to Dinajpur, Lalmanirhat and support Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike? Don't we owe some allegiance to Dudley Senanayake? What's our position on Nagalingan Samnugathan? Are we eschewing Rohana Wijiwere? When are we going to shore up the Sri Lanka Party?"

The general coughed nervously for a time, then sputtered. "Will you spell that, sir?" He thought I was Sen. Fulbright.

"Okay," I said. "Shore up. S-h-o-r-e-u-p."

"Well, Toots," he said, "don't mention this to any egotistical exemplar of the Eastern Establishment, or cowardly commentator on CBS, but we just can't send our advisors, B-52's, F-4's, F-105's, Hueys, C-130's, defoliators, aircraft carriers, PXs and Bob Hope in there until we get a few things straightened out."

Like what, he was asked.

"Well, like finding out just where the fighting is going on," the general said. "The only maps we have, so far, are from an Esso gas station in Hagerstown, Md. where I live. I've asked the CIA to check, but I suspect they may be a little outdated. All they say about that part of the world is that it's all India, and one other thing."

"What's that?"

"Don't drink the water."

"Where's that leave us, high and dry without a war to send troops and stuff to?"

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"DON'T YOU WORRY, Toots," the general boomed. "Just as soon as we find out where this fightin's happened, and how to spell the names, by golly we'll jump in there with both feet. We can't let those people go down the drain, can we?"

"Which people?" I asked.

"You know very well which people," he thundered. "The people we'll go all out for, to save them from being taken over by atheistic hordes from the West — or is it the East? Moreover, we'll send the vice president over there to give morale talks to the troops, if necessary, plus a brand new USO show featuring Martha Raye AND Jane Fonda."

I thanked him, and sent my old war correspondent's uniform to the tailor's to have it let out.